

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 and 8-14 are all of the pending claims, with claims 1 and 8 being written in independent form. By this Amendment, claim 7 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1 and 3-6 are amended, and claims 9-14 are added. No new matter is added.

I. Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. § 102:

Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by US 6,193,566 to Isobe et al. ("Isobe"). The rejection is respectfully requested.

Isobe fails to disclose each and every feature recited in the rejected claims. For example, Isobe fails to disclose a preassembled component including a holder, having guide grooves formed on opposing sides thereof, as recited in amended claim 1.

Isobe relates to terminal devices for use of electrical equipment including control equipment such as push buttons, selector switches, indicator lamps, and the like. In Isobe, the terminal device includes a recovery mechanism that had a terminal screw 8 and a washer 14 to which the terminal screw 8 is attached. A washer guide section 16 is formed with the square washer 14 at the center of one side in a manner such that a washer guide section 16 is bent at right angles toward the terminal fixture 6 and extends parallel with the axis 15 of the terminal screw having a stopper section 17 being cut and raised from the washer guide section 16 at an intermediate or midway portion of its backside (opposite side to the terminal screw). A coil spring 18 is disposed between the stopper section 17 of the washer guide section 16 and the front wall 11 of a main body casing 10 (column 8, line 64-column 9, line 13; Fig. 11A).

It is alleged in the Office Action that Isobe discloses, at Fig. 11A, a switching device as recited in rejected claims. Specifically, it is alleged in the Office Action that the screw 8, washer 14, and washer guide section 16 correspond to the claimed "preassembled component" and that the washer guide section 16 corresponds to the claimed "holder," and the screw 8 and washer 14 correspond to the claimed "screw-with-washer assembly." However, even accepting the interpretation of Isobe, the applied reference fails to disclose that the washer guide section 16 (the alleged "holder") has guide grooves formed on opposing sides thereof. Rather, as shown in Figs. 11A and 11B, and described in the specification of Isobe, the washer guide section 16 is integrally formed with the square washer, such that the washer guide section 16 is bent at right angles toward

the terminal fixture 6. There is no description of the washer guide section 16 having guide grooves formed on opposing sides thereof. Accordingly, Isobe fails to disclose each and every feature recited within the rejected claims. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

II. New Claims

The applied reference fails to disclose or suggest each and every feature recited in claims 9-14. For example, Isobe fails to disclose or suggest, that the clamping device is in the form of a module that is attachable to the switching device, and the spring element is prestressed over a narrow point protruding from the holder, as recited in claim 9, or that the spring element is prestressed over a narrow point protruding from the housing, as recited in claim 10.

CONCLUSION

Applicants earnestly solicit reconsideration and allowance of all of the pending claims.

The Commissioner is authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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